

Torres, Francine

From: stephanie@ecodairyfarms.com%inter2 [stephanie@ecodairyfarms.com] on behalf of stephanie@ecodairyfarms.com
Sent: Tuesday, February 22, 2005 12:55 PM
To: Torres, Francine
Subject: NOSB Pasture Guidance
Attachments: ATTACHMENT.TXT

I am an organic dairy farmer milking 2300 cows producing organic milk for Humboldt Creamery in Northern California.

Consistent with the NOSB recommendations and consumer expectations, I as a dairy farmer enthusiastically support the NOSB Livestock Committee Recommendation Pasture Requirements for the National Organic Program dated February 1, 2005. A quantitative minimum pasture policy with measurable parameters needs to be adopted by the NOP. Please include specific language that needs to say:

1. The pasture definition be refined that "pasture" is land managed to maintain or improve soil, water, and vegetative resources and to provide maximum feed value by growing suitable grasses and other forages from which graze plant mater still connected to its roots.
2. Organic dairy animals from 6 month of age and up, must consume no less than 30% of their daily dry matter intake from pasture for a minimum of 120 calendar days per year, with a maximum stocking rate of three lactating dairy cows per acre.
3. Stage of lactation is not a stage of production.

Pasture basic to what organic dairying is all about – using natural systems to produce healthy organic food for consumers. There is no more natural system for organic dairy cows than pasture. Pasture not only leads to healthy cows, but to a healthy environment and to milk with superior health qualities for our consumers. Look at almost any reference generically describing organic milk and they have the same basic message – organic milk comes from pastured cows. That's what consumers of organic dairy products expect and that is what we as organic dairy producers must ensure they get.

I urge the NOSB to adopt the Livestock Committee Pasture Recommendation and add the above specificity, making true access to pasture a reality.

Sincerely,

Blake & Stephanie Alexandre



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